

N^o 3
The CORRUPTION OF POPERY, and the PRE-
TENDED TITLE OF THE CHEVALIER,

CONSIDERED AND EXPOSED.

A
S E R M O N

Preached at the Parish Church of

Allhallows on the Wall;

DECEMBER 1. 1745.

By SAMUEL SMITH, L.L.B.

Rector of *Allhallows.* K



L O N D O N;

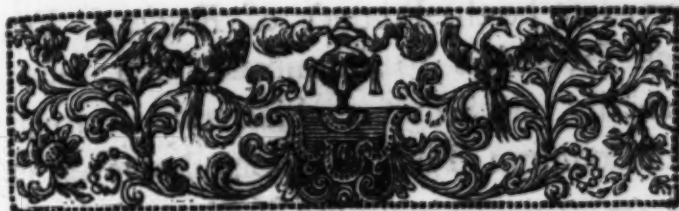
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*Prove all things : hold fast that which
is good.*



Y Text supposes, that good Things have some certain Criterion ; and may be discovered in the Issue of a diligent Examination. It is absurd to embrace or reject Things in gross, and without Distinction : The former, is the Character of the implicit Believer ; the latter, of the implicit Unbeliever.

OUR Saviour foretold, that false Prophets should arise ; and History will answer for the

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Truth of this Prediction. *Enthusiasm* is observed to be the Product of *England*. Fanatic Pretenders to Illumination and superior Sanctity, are Seducers which have swarmed in our Country: Their Delusions, however, may be compared to transitory Vapors; and vanish as soon as they are set in a clear Light. I should imagine, the Scripture Censures to be pointed upon these bold and successful Deceivers, who have imposed either a false Religion, or false Doctrines, upon whole Kingdoms. Such, whatsoever magnificent Titles they assume, may be stiled *sons of perdition*.

MAHOMET set up his Banners in the *East*, and established his Religion by the Sword. This Imposture has there long eclipsed the *Sun of righteousness*; and still prevails, for Reasons of Providence, which we cannot penetrate.

IN other Parts, the Bishop of *Rome* grasps at universal Empire; and lays Claim to the Kingdoms of this World, and the Keys of Heaven. . To secure an abject, unlimited Subjection from all his Proselytes, they are taught

to

to believe, that he can call in the secular Arm to save or destroy; that his Blessings and Curses are definitive Sentences, and will open or shut the Gates of Paradise: Whatsoever Villainy they perpetrate to advance his holy Cause, he will quiet their Consciences with an Absolution at their Departure hence, and furnish them with a Passport to *Abraham's Bosom*.

MAHOMETISM and POPERY are avow'd Enemies to Knowledge: The one, by discouraging Printing and all Literature; the other, by locking up the Scriptures in an unknown Tongue. Both owe much to the mighty Prejudices of Education: Both spread abroad like *the cedars of Libanus*, by a forced Growth, i.e. by the Patronage or Compulsion of the Civil Power. Look upon any Country where *Mahometism* or *Popery* is planted; pure and undefiled Religion cannot flourish under their baneful Shade. The *Pope* pretends to make Saints by a formal Canonization, and to inroll Men, after their Dissolution, in the Number of the Blessed. A *Mussulman*, with all his Credulity, admits no Saints created as these are, which fill the *Romish* Kalendar; nor invokes any

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any such imaginary Protectors. He relies upon one Prophet and Mediator; the now, as he believes, beatified *Mahomet*. — Pay no implicit Deference to any Authority upon Earth; but examine all Things with Attention, and be determined by Evidence. Such a Procedure, will lead us through all Labyrinths, to Truth, and be consistent with the Character of rational Creatures. GOD gave us our Faculties, and the making a proper Use of them, must entitle us to his Approbation. It is every Man's Duty to consult his Reason and Conscience, and to rely upon the Direction of those faithful Guides.

IT would be endless to run into an historical Deduction of all the religious Institutions, or Forms of civil Policy, which have prevailed in the World. — The Direction of our Apostle may be taken in a Latitude, and applied to Matters of Religion or Government: For the great Question in both is, what Scheme will approve itself to an impartial Judgment, upon a near View, and deliberate Enquiry. We are blessed with a Church which *Geneva* herself admires; and with a limited, qualified Monarchy,

Monarchy, under which, certain Duties are incumbent upon Prince and People: Let me exhort you, therefore, to *bold fast that which is good.* Let me recommend to you a stedfast Adherence to our Established Church, and to those just Maxims of Government upon which, I take it, the ever memorable Revolution and Protestant Succession are founded.

POPERY is what our Fore-fathers proved, to their abundant Conviction and Cost. May we always have the Principles of it in a due Abhorrence, and never repeat Ourselves the fatal Experiment. True Religion, is to be supported by Evidence and Persuasion: False, only by the Methods of Art, or Coersion, Could the Church of *Rome* produce full Evidence for the Miracles she boasts, her Cruelty would confute her Pretensions, and demonstrate her Apostasy. How many were to have fallen Victims to her, at one decisive Stroke, in the Reign of *James I.* never can, or ought to be forgotten by us. The Gunpowder Plot, immortalized the Contrivers of it at *Rome*: And had it succeeded, the unparallel'd Scene of Slaughter would have adorned her Annals with

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a glorious Memorial. It is amazing, that any should think a merciless Disposition can qualify them for those Mansions, where the most refined Love will dwell for ever, and triumph in its full Energy.

THE *Romish* Church wisely demands an implicit Assent to her Tenets, because they will not stand the slightest Scrutiny. They are calculated to enslave and corrupt Mankind: Views ever to be detested, as the very Reverse of those, which governed the most benevolent Author and Finisher of our Faith. Morality is prior to revealed Religion. We should expect to find Virtue well guarded, and its Influence or Authority enlarged by any System, which was, I do not say of divine, but human Establishment. What Encouragement and Sanction are given to all Kinds of Licentiousness by that Church, which sets Dispensations and Pardons to Sale? She allows her Members to compound for their Transgressions; and trafficks in Vice. We are shocked at her impious Claim to *Infallibility*, one of G O D's incommunicable Attributes; and at her uncharitableness,

ritableness, in consigning all, who are out of her Pale, to the Damnation of Hell.

HER avowed Aim is, to keep Men in Ignorance, and to establish the Kingdom of Darkness. For *Transubstantiation* prohibits the Use of our Senses, and *Infallibility* that of our Reason.

POPERY, if delineated with all its fantastic Processions and Ceremonies, exhibits to us a very disadvantageous Image of Christianity. It is rather a refined scheme of secular Policy, disguised under the Veil of Religion. — We renounce it, as big with all the Absurdities and Mischiefs of Idolatry, Superstition, and Tyranny. The Pope sets up himself as an Idol in the mystical Temple of GOD, or Christian Church. He assumes a Power of discharging Kings or Subjects from their Oaths, and of dissolving every Band of Society. He acts in Conformity to no Rule less, than to the Doctrine or Example of CHRIST, whose Vicar he claims to be by a peculiar Appointment.

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WE were delivered from the Yoke of Papal Bondage at the Reformation. History has scarce recorded any Plot against our Religion and Liberties, since that glorious *Æra*, which was not formed at *Rome*, or by some of her Sons and Incendiaries. *Spain* and *France* have constantly turned their Arts and Arms, or all their Engines of Destruction, against us: They have laboured by secret Conspiracies, and open Invasions, to accomplish our Ruin, and their own ambitious Devices. The boasted *Armada* of *Spain*, destin'd against us in 1588, seemed to be defeated by some special Interposition of Providence. — *France*, in the next following Century, was more successful; not by Dint of Arms, but by dark Intrigues. For, to effect the Down-fal of that excellent Prince, *Charles* the First, she acted in Concert with his domestick Enemies, and plung'd us into the direful Calamities of a Civil War.

WHAT a Deluge of Blood has been shed in *France*, and other Countries, by that inhuman Zeal which Popery infuses? The
Massacre

Massacre at *Thorn*, since our Memory, was called by the then Primate of *Poland*, a *sacred* Execution. He thought, that with such Sacrifices GOD is pleased; and his religious Principles, which should have raised his Compassion, extinguished it.

MOST Protestant Princes and States seem, at this time of Day, to stand neuter to the Interests of their Religion, while Popery is ever enlarging its Borders. Gratitude to Providence for the repeated Deliverances with which we have been signalized, should excite us to imploy our Influence and Mediation (wheresoever they may be interposed) for the Relief of our persecuted, foreign Brethren.

THE Re-establishment of Popery in this Kingdom, could only be considered as an Effect of GOD's Displeasure for our manifold Provocations, and imputed to the Hand of a destroying Angel. That Numbers were burnt for their Religion, in the short and bloody Reign of *Queen Mary*, the History of it will inform you. The late King *James*

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was no sooner firmly seated upon the Throne, but he trampled upon the Laws, and his own solemn Declarations. Could he have kept the Seat of Government, and baffled all Opposition, it is not improbable, that he would have proceeded to the Barbarities, and re-kindled the Flames of *Mary*. A misguided Conscience in religious Matters, principally induced him to those Acts of Violence, which were an indelible Blot upon his Reign, and brought it to a shameful End.

BUT admit Popery is ever so corrupt, could Men be debarr'd of their Rights for an Attachment to it? In answer to this Question, I must observe, that the Exclusion of King *James*, and the Popish Line, was evidently lawful; unless you will affirm, that our Property and Religion ought not to be secured. The *Chevalier's* Claim, therefore, cannot have any Foundation.

A KING has the most important Trust reposed in him; and every good one, will have no Passion to indulge, incompatible with
his

his darling View, the Welfare of his People.

To conspire against him, is adjudged the most enormous Crime; upon a Presumption, that his Life is of the utmost Consequence to the Community. Treason is stamped with a peculiar Infamy, and involves the Delinquent's innocent Children in the Forfeitures, or rather penal Consequences, that await it. Such an accumulated Punishment of evil Doers, in their nearest Relatives, is designed as a powerful Check to Rebellion, and a Provision for the Good of the Whole.

THE Head of the Community, has no more a Licence to destroy the most momentous Interests of it, than any of the inferior Members. King *James* would have stretch'd limited Prerogative into lawless Power; and grasped at absolute Monarchy. If the People then had Privileges, they might defend them; and as justifiably oppose *notorious* domestick Oppressions, as foreign Invasions. When King
James

James broke through the most sacred Ties, and subverted our Rights, which he was sworn to guard; why ought not he and his Heirs to be excluded? He could give no Security for his future Conduct; which he had not already infringed and violated. Such an Exclusion was therefore judged necessary for the Preservation of our Church and State. The same good Reasons upon which any other salutary Precaution was taken for the common Welfare, advised or required this Proceedure. The collected Interest of *all* the Individuals; not the Aggrandizement of any *one*, is the primary End in which every Law ought to terminate.

THE Supreme legislative Power is *ordinarily* vested, with us, in King, Lords, and Commons; so that neither can violate any Law which was not enacted by their joint Concurrence. While Prince and People make the Maxims of the Constitution their Rules of Action; the Consequence will probably be (what at this Time subsists between us and our King) a reciprocal Affection, or apparent

parent Harmony. But if the People will break down the Fences of the Throne, or the Prince those of private Property; some Revolution, fatal to one or both, must ensue upon this unnatural Struggle.

IT cannot be pretended, that the Conditions imposed upon King *James* were unlawful; or that, when he ascended the Throne, he took full Possession of the Consciences and Fortunes of his Subjects. For all People are vested, by G O D, with a Power to frame their own Laws and Government; and consequently, they must judge of the Religion, or other Qualifications of him, who is to administer them.

OUR best Laws must be insignificant, if we could take no Cognizance of the Principles or Conduct of our Prince, to whom we intrust the Execution. — Our Power, to limit the Descent of the Crown to the Protestant Line; and to prescribe the Conditions upon which it was to be held, could not be disputed. For private Estates and Crowns,
descend

descend alike, in pursuance of Laws which were made by ourselves, and founded in *Expedience*. The eldest Son has not any natural or divine Right to the Inheritance ; but takes it by the common Usage or Law of the Kingdom. Should the People of *England* (by their Representatives) agree to cancel this Usage, and to make Lands equally descendible to all the Sons or Children, (as they were until the Conquest) whatsoever might be objected to the Policy or Convenience of such a Measure, we could on no Ground impeach the Justice or Validity of it,

No natural or divine Law, declares Crowns Hereditary : If a certain Rule of Succession has been established in most Kingdoms ; the single Point of View in it was publick Good, or a Prevention of those intestine Commotions, which might attend an Election. Every Rule is dispensable, and must give Way, when it defeats the very End for which it was appointed. Should the customary Succession in a Kingdom, prove at any Time productive of much greater Evils than those it was intended

tended to obviate; it may questionless be superceded occasionally.

THIS Point is so evident from the Reason of the Thing, that we need not appeal to the Practice of Nations. No Rule of Prudence or civil Policy, can less want a formal Proof or Defence. If all the Branches of our Royal Family had been determined *Roman Catholicks*, this Case would have been similar to an Extinction of it. For all must have been excluded upon the same Principle, and the Crown set upon the Head of some Protestant Prince.

THE Exception to King *James*, was his Religion; and this Religion would have been an Argument of equal Force, against any Prince or Princes who adhered to it. The Happiness of no one Family can be allowed, in any Instance assignable, to stand in Competition with that of Millions.

OUR Oaths or Engagements of Fidelity to the Government, proceed upon a Supposition,

sition, that we shall reap Advantage and Protection from from it ; for they can upon no other, admit of any rational Construction. Those who plighted their Faith and Allegiance to King *James*, never designed in doing so, to forge their own Chains, or stipulate for Oppression. The Will of a misguided Prince could not be the Law of the Realm. Now every Man may repel unlawful Attempts upon his Person or Property, and is armed by GOD, with Authority for Self-defence. Will any assert, that we shall be damned hereafter ; because we would not submit to the galling Yoke of Oppression and Tyranny here ? This Assertion, I conceive, as much contradicts our Notions of GOD, as Transubstantiation does the Testimony of our Senses. All Authority indeed derives from GOD ; but this will not infer the unlawfulness of opposing any Misapplication of it. He is the Donor of all our natural Powers ; yet Human Laws restrain the Exercise of them, *i. e.* Men are not permitted to act according to private Will. If the Prince, amidst the dazzling Glories of the Throne, will stoop so low

as to fancy himself in the Subject's Case ; and if the Subject, guarded with Humility, will imagine himself in the Prince's Station, both must be convinced of their Obligations, and proceed by the best Rule that ever was laid down for the Actions of Men.

LET us suppose the Person who now claims the Crown, a real Descendant of King *James*, and wave the contested Point of his Legitimacy. His Right from Proximity of Blood, has been barr'd or extinguished by the Determination of the States of the Realm, at the Revolution ; and by subsequent Acts : But is not the Royal Assent necessary to every Act ; and was not that wanting after King *James* abdicated ? While the Throne is full, the Royal Assent is necessary, But nothing could invalidate any Resolution passed by a Convention of the States, during the Vacancy, or Interregnum : For upon *them*, the whole Supreme Authority devolved at that extraordinary Conjunction.

WE could upon no Vacancy supposable, admit the *Pretender* as a Candidate for our

Throne. He has been trained up in the Maxims of *Popery*; and whatsoever Oath he might take to maintain our Religion and Liberties; would be bound by those Maxims to destroy them. The most explicit Assurances could not be depended upon from one, whose Religion authorized any mental Distinction or Prevarication. How far an Incapacity to exercise a Right, may induce a Forfeiture of it, I shall not presume to determine: But King *James* was incapable, in Consequence of his Principles, of governing, or at least, of governing well our Nation.

POPERY disqualifies a King to reign over a Protestant People; for it commissions or enjoins him to extirpate them. This Religion in any Prince, is now declared, by a wise Resolution of the Legislature, a legal Disability.

I HAVE endeavoured to vindicate that happy Change of Government, which took Place at the Revolution, and is the Basis of our present Establishment. The illustrious House of *Hanover*, pleads not only Possession of

of the Crown (which yet was made sufficient by the Statute of *Henry VII.*) but an undoubted Title to it from the Act of Settlement.

WE all enjoy our Liberty, and our Fortune be it little or much, without Molestation. To offer Arguments to any one for this Truth, is unnecessary, and would imply a Reflection upon his Understanding. What thinking Man, would attempt to overturn our excellent Constitution? If we pull down the Fabrick; our Religion and Liberty must be buried in the Ruins. But Men of all Denominations have exerted themselves with that Unanimity and Zeal, which the Crisis required. May we always thus banish our petty Animosities, and unite under the comprehensive Characters of *Englishmen* and *Protestants*, against our foreign Enemies. Let us not render Evil for Evil; but treat *Papists* with all the Candor and Moderation, which are consistent with the Maxims of Prudence, and a becoming Regard for our own Security. We cannot entrust them with Power, or put a Sword into their Hands, which they never had,

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had, without employing it against us. The Countenance they have received from some, and our general Inattention to religious Concerns, may have contributed not a little to their Increase in this Kingdom. I would by no Means recommend the Exercise of any Severities, or adopt that Principle of their Religion, for which we most condemn it: But it is hoped, that the Inexecution of penal Laws, or Lenity of the Government, will never be construed by them as a *Toleration*.

OUR Fear, or rather the Grounds of it, will not be extinguished with the present Rebellion, except we repent. Impending Judgments are only to be averted by a sincere and general Reformation. If we have a purer Religion than others; let it be exemplified in our Lives. Unless we are reformed in our Practice, as well as Principles, in vain do we glory in the Title of *Protestants*

THE Luxury of Men in low Stations, keeps Pace and Growth with that of those in high;

considered and exposed.

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high; and an Indifference to Religion, prevails amongst all. Piety, Charity, and the Graces of our Christian Profession, would derive upon us God's Favour, and *fight* for us *against* our enemies, *better than a mighty shield, and strong spear.*

F I N I S.



